

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
LIBRARY

ROCK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to present the Annual Report on the sanitary circumstances, the sanitary administration and the vital statistics of the district for the year ending December 31st 1925.

The Memorandum of the Ministry dated December 1925 directs that a Survey Report should be prepared dealing with (a) The measure of progress made in the area during the preceding five years in the improvement of the public health, (b) The extent and character of the changes made during that period in the Public Health services of the area, (c) any further action of importance in the organization or development of public health services contemplated by the Local Authority or considered desirable by the Medical Officer of Health.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

The district is a small one, comprising three parishes, Rock, Mamble and Bayton and covers an area of 13,314 acres. It stands high - from four to seven hundred feet above sea level, with deep intersecting valleys, making road gradients severe. A considerable area of it is covered by the Wyre Forest. The inhabitants are mostly engaged in agriculture and fruit growing. There are two or three small Collieries employing about twenty men; the Bayton Colliery has now been closed. The greater part of the district overlays the Wyre Forest Coal Measures, the south-eastern corner alone being on the old red sandstone. There are many small-holders in the district living on their own land and a number of summer residences on the Forest.

The population is for the most part thinly scattered with an average of one person to six acres, with groups of houses at Rock, Clows Top, Far Forest, Bayton and Mamble.

The Workhouse is at Cleobury Mortimer.

Area in acres.	-	-	13,314
Population Census (1921)	-	-	2,152
" estimated 1925.	-	-	2,187
Number of the inhabited houses (1921).	-	-	527
Number of separate families or occupiers (1921)	-	-	533
Rateable value.	-	-	£14,596
Sum represented by penny rate.	-	-	£45:15:8:

VITAL STATISTICS.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	
Births(Legitimate	36	13	23	<u>Birthrate</u> 17.3
(Illegitimate.	2	1	1	
Deaths 39.	-			<u>Death-rate</u> 13.2

Number of women dying in or in consequence of childbirth 0.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age.	-	0.
" from Measles (all ages).	-	0
" " Whooping Cough (all ages).	-	0
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age).	-	0

VITAL STATISTICS 1921 - 25

	<u>Birth-rate</u>	<u>Death-rate</u>	<u>Infant Mortality Rate</u>
1921	19.5	17.1	47
1922	13.8	11.9	66
1923	20.2	17.5	68
1924	15.1	13.2	121
1925	17.3	13.2	Nil
Average of)			
5 years)	17.2	14.6	60

The Birth-rate (17.3) is about the average for the district, but below that of England and Wales for the year 18.3. The proportion of elderly people living in the district is well above the average of the country generally owing to the lack of work for younger men at a good wage. This fact also accounts for the high average death-rate in this rural area.

The death-rate for the year 13.2 is below the average for the last five years, but higher than that of England and Wales for 1925, viz:- 12.2.

The chief causes of death were:- Influenza 3: Tuberculous disease, 1; Cancer 3: Cerebral hemorrhage 1: Heart Disease 11: Bronchitis 1: Pneumonia 1: Appendicitis 1: Nephritis 1: Suicide 1: and other defined diseases 5.

Heart Disease, as previously noted, is by far the commonest cause to which deaths are attributable. The majority of them are associated with old age. Influenza was very prevalent during the year and was responsible for three deaths.

INFANTILE MORTALITY. No death of infant under twelve months took place during the year. The rate has varied greatly from year to year, but the average of the five years, viz: 60 is a favourable one for such a district, which is out of the reach of a Child Welfare Centre.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

There are no Hospitals in the district of any kind.

HOSPITALS PROVIDED OR SUBSIDIZED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY OR BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

1. Tuberculosis, Knightwick Sanatorium is provided by the County Council and available for patients from the district.

2. Maternity.	)	
3. Childrens.	)	Nil.
4. Fever.	)	
5. Smallpox.	)	

There is no Institutional Provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the area.

There is no ambulance either for infectious cases or non-infectious and accident cases in the district; use is made of the County ambulance in certain cases.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

Maternity and Child Welfare Centres. There are none in the district nor any near enough to serve the area satisfactorily.

Day Nurseries.	)	
School Clinics.	)	Nil.

Tuberculosis Dispensaries at Stourport and Kidderminster.

V.D. treatment Centres at Worcester and Kidderminster.

All the Centres and Clinics are provided by the County Council.

The Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector are the only Public Health Officers of the Local Authority and a contribution to their salaries is made under the Public Health Acts.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

a. General. This is carried out by private nurse secured from the neighbouring towns.

b. For Infectious Disease. The County Council provides a nurse in outbreaks of Measles, Whooping Cough and sore-throats of indefinite character on the application of the district Medical Officer of Health, who supplies a list of cases and receives a report on them. The District Council contributes to the salary of the Nurse.

MIDWIVES. No midwife is employed or subsidised by the District Council. There are two practising in the district.

CHEMICAL WORK. The County Council Laboratory is available for water analyses, but it is the custom to have this work done by the Medical Officer of Health. Two samples from private wells were examined during the year and both found unsatisfactory.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE. There are no local Acts or Special Orders in force and no Acts have been adopted and no byelaws are in force.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water. Nearly all the houses in the district are supplied by wells, and where there is evidence of possible pollution a sample is analysed. Two were dealt with satisfactorily during the year.

At Bayton the estate supply is laid on to the Village and serves 14 houses, and there are public wells at Mamble and Clows Top.

RIVERS AND STREAMS. The river Rea and the various streams passing through the district receive no pollution requiring any action.

DRAINAGE & SEWAGE Certain groups of houses, Mamble, Bayton, Rock and Clow's Top are connected to the Public Sewers, estimated by the Inspector at 30. At Rock the outfall has been the cause of complaint on the part of the owner of the land. The Council have dealt with the matter, piping the effluent on to land away from the public road and houses.

Elsewhere the individual houses run their sewage on to the land or into ditches, where it is rapidly absorbed.

New drains have been laid or old drains reconstructed at sixteen houses. Complaints in regard to nuisances from stagnant sewage matter are few and are usually promptly remedied.

Earth closets are nearly universal in the area, except in a few of the larger residences which have water closets, about twenty in number. The contents are disposed of on the gardens or agricultural land. Where there is a good garden the policy of instituting pail closets is pursued, for the protection of the water supply.

There is no public scavenging and no public ash-tips provided.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT. The Inspector acts also as Surveyor for the area and is daily engaged on inspections; he visited 184 premises during the year.

Ten informal notices were served and two legal.

A tabular statement of the subject of these notices and the work carried out is supplied by the Inspector and attached to the report. A large number of offensive accumulations and drainage defects have been dealt with.

SCHOOLS. The elementary schools have been visited frequently and the water supply and sanitary conveniences are in good order.

The Heightington School was closed for a few days on account of Influenza in December and in January and March for Coughs and colds, Bayton and Far Forest Schools had a fortnight's closure in March for Mumps.

HOUSING

1. GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

I. The majority of houses are of considerable age, but have been kept in repair and for the most part satisfactory. Scattered here and there over the area are a few that have reached the limit of their usefulness and are being gradually closed.

The prevailing rents in the district are low and it is very difficult to find homes for the displaced tenants. There are no surplus cottages and in every parish there is a demand for them at a rent not too high for the agricultural worker. The Bayton Colliery, which employed about seventy men was closed some time back and although one or two smaller ones have been opened, there is a reduction in the number of men employed in the coal industry in the area.

II. Overcrowding. Very little exists in the district and the few cases that have been dealt with have resulted from large families in small houses and not from lodgers, or more than one family in a house.

III. Fitness of houses. The general standard of housing is good, and beyond occasional drainage defects, action has had to be taken in regard to old houses, which are structurally unsound in walls and roof, and it is doubtful whether the owners will consider them worth repair, in which case they will be closed.

The Inspector is very diligent in inspecting houses and calling for repairs, where necessary, and no special difficulties have arisen with owners in getting the work carried out.

IV. There are no unhealthy areas in the district.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year:-

a. Total. - - - 13

b. With State assistance under the Housing Acts 1919, 1923, or 1924.

(1) By the Local Authority. - - - 0

(ii) By other bodies or persons. - - - 5

1. Unfit dwelling houses.

Inspections:

1. Total number inspected. - - - 184

2. Number inspected and recorded. - - - 75

3. Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous to health as to be unfit for habitation. - - - 0

4. Number of dwelling-houses found not to be in all respects fit for human habitation. 6

2. Remedy of defects without service of formal notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers. - 4

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

Nil.

B. Proceedings under P. H. Acts.

Nil.

C. Proceedings under sections 17 & 18 of the Housing, Town Planning Act 1909

Nil.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

a. Milk Supply. The district is well supplied with milk of good quality owing to the number of small holdings in the district. The Inspector has a list of seventy-one persons producing milk, and the majority supply a few of their neighbours. Only two may be regarded as registered

Milk sellers and make a living out of it, whilst about a dozen send the milk away in bulk.

The sheds have been inspected quarterly and are reported in good structural and sanitary condition. No inspection of cattle for Tubercle is undertaken by the Council and no license has been granted for the sale of milk under special designations under the Milk (Special Designations) Order 1923.

b. Meat. Mr. Winwood has been appointed Meat Inspector and makes frequent calls for that purpose at the time of slaughter.

The slaughter-houses are all in good repair.

	<u>In 1920</u>	<u>In January</u> <u>1925</u>	<u>In December</u> <u>1925.</u>
Registered.	0	0	0
Licensed.	5	5	5

The Bakehouses have been inspected regularly during the year and are clean and the regulations carried out.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the five years 1920 - 24 fourteen cases of Scarlet Fever, three of Diphtheria, two of Erysipelas, one of Enteric Fever, one of Puerperal Fever, one of Pneumonia, one of Acute Poliomyelitis, two of Encephalitis Lethargica were notified with nine cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and one of other forms. There was no death from either Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria during the period and the type in the case of both diseases was very mild. The Scarlet Fever cases were as a rule associated with School attendance.

I have no doubt that careful inspection of the children in School will be quite as efficient in controlling an outbreak as school closure.

There is no doubt that previously Schools were closed out of deference to the opinions of the Managers and public and not on sound public Health grounds. Influenza and Whooping Cough have been prevalent during most of the past five winters and in the case of these diseases I believe that school closure for a short period has been beneficial in cutting short the epidemic.

Both cases of Encephalitis Lethargica were removed to Hospitals, outside the district prior to notification. They occurred in different years and were in no way connected with one another.

Bacteriological and Pathological specimens are examined at the County Laboratory free of cost. Full advantage is taken of these facilities.

There has been no case of verminous houses or persons requiring disinfection and the adoption of the part of the Public Health Act 1925 dealing with this matter has not been considered necessary in this district.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING 1925.

	<u>Total cases notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted to Hospital</u>	<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Diphtheria	1	0	0
Scarlet Fever.	6	0	0
Encephalitis Lethargica.	1	1	0

Four cases of Scarlet Fever occurred in July in children attending Rock School, and two at Heightington in November in connection with an outbreak in the neighbouring district where the school was closed for this cause.

Encephalitis Lethargica. For the third year in succession a case of this disease was notified, and removed to Kidderminster Infirmary.

Tuberculosis. Two cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified in males aged 20 and 40 years and one male died aged 42 from non-pulmonary form of the disease.

One of the greatest needs of the district I consider is a district nurse for each parish. They are invaluable in an area like this, where medical aid is not easily and expeditiously obtained, and their educative value is a necessity in all country parishes.

The provision of further houses in all parts of the area is undoubtedly called for, although private enterprise has provided 13 during the year.

There is no doubt the past five years have been characterised by a gradual improvement both in the condition of the houses, and also the sanitation of the district.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ALFRED E. WHITE.

The following is an Account furnished by the Sanitary Inspector,
of Sanitary Work for the Year ending 31st December 1925,
in the Rock Rural Sanitary District.

-
- a Number of houses which have been inspected during the above period, either in connection with outbreaks of infectious disease, or in consequence of complaints, or in the course of a systematic Sanitary Survey. - - 184
- a Please note that this number should include all houses inspected, including those under the Housing and Town Planning Act, but not houses that are visited for another purpose without an inspection of the premises.

Number of legal notices sent.	-	-	2
Number of informal notices sent.	-	-	10
Number of such notices complied with.	-	-	2
Number of letters written.	-	-	39

Particulars of Sanitary Matters referred to in the above Notices:-

(a) Houses to be disinfected after Infectious Disease.	-	-	8
(b) Deficient or objectionable water supply.	-	-	6
(c) New drains to be constructed or old drains to be amended.	-	-	16
(d) New closets to be provided or old ones to be amended in construction.	-	-	1
(e) Houses damp or dirty, or admitting rain, or weather, or otherwise in a bad sanitary condition.	-	-	6
(f) Offensive accumulations of all kinds.	-	-	10
(g) Animals so kept as to be a nuisance.	-	-	0
(h) Houses overcrowded.	-	-	1

Houses disinfected after infectious disease (other than phthisis).	-	-	7
Houses disinfected in cases of phthisis	-	-	1
Privies converted to water closets.	-	-	0
Privies converted to earth closets.	-	-	1
Plans for new houses passed.	-	-	13
Certificates issued for water supply to new houses.	-	-	13
Houses connected to public water supply.	-	-	0
Repairs to public pumps and wells.	-	-	1
New public wells.	-	-	0
Private wells re-constructed or improved.	-	-	8
Houses connected to public sewerage.	-	-	0
Lengths of new sewers laid.	-	-	0
Lengths of new water mains laid.	-	-	0

Proceedings before Magistrates for
Remarks

(Signed) G. F. WINWOOD Inspector.

